

Exhibit No. 8Date 4/6/2011Bill No. SJR 27

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2011

TESTIMONY ON SJR 27, PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE and SAFETY COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN MURPHY AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE,

FOR THE RECORDS MY NAME IS SYLVIA DANFORTH, I'M FROM MILES CITY AND I AM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DEAP, A NOT FOR PROFIT CORPORATION PROVIDING A VARIETY OF SERVICES TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN 12 SOUTHEASTERN MONTANA COUNTIES FOR OVER 34 YEARS.

I STRONGLY SUPPORT SJR 27 REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF A MEDICAID WAIVER FOR CHILDREN'S DISABILITY SERVICES.

CHILDREN ARE DEPENDENT ON THEIR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS IN HOME SETTINGS AND OTHER NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS. PARENTS HAVE THE 24 HOUR RESPONSIBILITY OF THEIR CARE AND SAFETY AND ARE THE PRIMARY DECISION MAKERS REGARDING THEIR CHILD'S NEEDS. CHILDREN CHANGE QUICKLY AND ARE INTENSELY AFFECTED BY THE NEEDS OF THE FAMILY. A HOME BASED MODEL OF SERVICE MUST BE FLEXIBLE AND HIGHLY INDIVIDUALIZED TO MEET THE DYNAMIC CHANGING NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES AND THE RESULTING CONSTANTLY CHANGING SERVICE PLAN AND COST PLAN.

SINCE CHILDREN'S WAIVER SERVICES BEGAN, OUR FAMILY CENTERED MODEL HAS SUPPORTED FAMILIES IN KEEPING THEIR CHILDREN IN THEIR HOMES. CHILDREN DO NOT GO TO THE INSTITUTION AND THERE ARE FEW CHILDREN IN GROUP HOMES BUT WE ARE SERVING OVER 330 CHILDREN IN THE CURRENT WAIVER. THERE IS A NETWORK OF CHILDREN'S SERVICE PROVIDERS WHO HAVE PROVIDED ACCOUNTABLE SERVICES WITH A HIGH LEVEL OF FAMILY SATISFACTION. HOWEVER, THE INCREASING DEMANDS OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND DOCUMENTATION ERODE THE FAMILY FRIENDLY SERVICES. OUR HIGHLY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL FAMILY SUPPORT SPECIALISTS MUST CONCENTRATE ON BILLABLE MINUTES, AND GREATLY INCREASED PAPER WORK REQUIREMENTS WHEN THEIR SKILLS AND TIME WOULD BEST BE SPENT DEVELOPING CHILD SKILLS AND IMPLEMENTING BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES THAT WILL SUPPORT THE CHILD TOWARD INDEPENDENCE.

THIS STUDY CAN LOOK AT WAYS TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICES IN A MORE COST EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENTLY MAINTAINING THE FAMILY CENTERED MODEL WITHOUT ALL THE REQUIREMENTS IMPOSED FOR ADULTS LIVING IN 24 HOUR CARE. PARENTS KNOW THEIR CHILDREN BEST AND ARE THE PRIMARY DECISION MAKERS REGARDING THEIR HEALTH AND SAFETY. CHILDREN'S WAIVER SERVICES NEED TO BE DIFFERENT BECAUSE WE VALUE PARENTS AS DECISION MAKERS AND BECAUSE CHILDREN ARE DIFFERENT THAN ADULTS. THE STUDY WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT OTHER SERVICE MODELS AND WAIVERS THAT WILL SUPPORT COST EFFECTIVE, FLEXIBLE, SERVICES THAT MEET THE VARYING NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

PLEASE SUPPORT SJR 27. THANK YOU.